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McMorris Rodgers Works to Give Families more Workplace Flexibility

(Washington, D.C.) Today, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers introduced legislation that makes it easier for working mothers and fathers to balance the demands of work and family life.

“As a working mother, I know how important it is to find balance between work and family,” McMorris Rodgers said. Current law today prevents working families in the private sector from having the same flexibility given to government workers. This is why I am once again reintroducing the Family-Friendly Workplace Act which removes obstacles that prevent working parents from spending time with their children or taking care of a sick relative.”

The “Family-Friendly Workplace Act” (H.R. 933) gives families the option to make choices that work best for them as well as meet the needs of our 21st century workforce. It gives employers the option of offering employees the choice of paid time off in lieu of cash wages for overtime hours worked if the employee prefers to take compensatory time instead of overtime pay. Instead of paid overtime, that employee could choose comp-time and take that time to care for an elderly parent or meet the needs of their kids. An employee would always be entitled to opt for overtime cash wages.

“Sixteen years ago, Congress gave families the option of taking time off work to welcome the birth or adoption of a new son or daughter, care for a sick relative or recover from a serious illness,” McMorris Rodgers said. “Yet on the 16th anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act, it can still be difficult for working mothers and fathers to balance the demands of work and family. Giving employees more flexibility in their workweek is key to increasing retention as well as attracting great employees that will help increase our country's competitiveness.”

Spokane-area businesses and their employees like Telect, KidCentric, Farm Services Credit Union, Provisional Staffing and Inland Northwest Health Services (INHS) already benefit from flexible workplace options.

“Especially in today’s economy, businesses are looking at ways to recruit and retain employees without additional costs,” said Amy Johnson, Vice President of Workforce Development and Public Policy at Greater Spokane Incorporated. “The Family Friendly Workplace Act would allow companies to keep highly-skilled, highly-valued workers and still remain competitive in our global economy.”

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